Ebeneret Stoerstur



A

## Funeral Discourse

PREACHED

On the Occasion of the Death of

The High, Puissant and most Illustrious PRINCE

#### FREDERICK LEWIS,

Prince of Great-Britain, Electoral Prince of Brunswick-Lunenburgh, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, &c.

In the Audience of

The Honorable

SPENCER PHIPS, Efg;

Lieutenant-Governor and Commander in Chief,

And the Honorable

His MAJESTY's COUNCIL,

Of the Province of the

MASSACHUSETTS-BAY:

On May 22d. 1751.

At Boston, NEW-ENGLAND.

By Samuel Mather, A. M. Pastor of a Church in Boston.

Maximus Ille quidem — Sper publica vixit:

Et, quâ natus erat, Gloria fumma Domus:

Sed Mortalis erat.

OVID. ad LIVIAM.

BOSTON: Printed by John Draper, Printer to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor and Council. 1751.

At a COUNCIL held at the Council-Chamber in Boston, on Wednesday the 22d of May, 1751.

VOTED,

Oliver, and Thomas Hutchinson, Esquare give the Thanks of this Board to the Rev. Mr. Samuel Mather, for his Sermon preached this Day on Occasion of the Death of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales; and to desire a Copy of him for the Press.

Copy examin'd,

per J. WILLARD, Secr.



#### A

#### FUNERAL DISCOURSE

Upon the DEATH of

The High, Puissant and most Illustrious PRINCE

## FREDERICK LEWIS,

Prince of GREAT-BRITAIN, &c.

#### ROMANS XI. 33.

O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD! How unsearchable are His Judgments and His Ways past finding out!

#### Honorable, Reverend and Beloved,

Death of his Royal Highness, THE PRINCE, reached us, and caused the Hearts of this most loyal People to contract and their Faces to gather a melancholy Gloom; These Words of the holy and learned Apostle came into my own pensive Mind, and engaged for a Season my own retired Sentiments.

There

There was not at that Time a fingle Tho't in my Heart, that it would fall to my Lot to perform such a mournful Office for the ROYAL SON, as I was once called to undertake for his ROYAL MOTHER, the late gracious Queen CAROLINE; whose Name yet lives esteemed, whose exalted Vertues are yet had in Renown, whose distinguished Merit is yet gratefully approved and owned, and whose Memory is yet, and will

continue to be, bleffed among us.

But, when I perceived it to be the Appointment of his Honour, The Commander in Chief, and the Honorable His Majesty's Council for the Province, that the Religious Part of the Funeral Obsequies of this Day should be committed to the Trust of one, who is so unmeet for it, and in all Respects so unequal to it; and that, as I suppose, because it fell in Course to me this Week to preach publickly; then from a Sense of Duty I submitted to their Appointment, acquiesced in their Pleasure and resolved in the Divine Strength to endeavor a Compliance with their Order and Expectation.

And then, The inspired Passage, which has been read unto us, recurred again immediately to my Mind: And, as I apprehend, that a suitable Discourse from it must be seasonable on the present Occasion; This is the very

Thing to be now endeavored.

The immediate Occasion of the Words before us was the foregoing Argument of the Apostle concerning the Rejection of the Jews for their Insidelity and Wickedness and the Reception of the Gentiles into the Church of the living GOD; which was a Mystery bidden for many Ages and Generations before the Time of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. There were indeed Predictions and Prophecies of these Things in the Writings of the old Testament; which either were not understood, or if understood were not believed, by the Jews. But it was given by Inspiration to the holy Paul to understand these ancient Predictions and Prophecies, and to confirm them in a sure and incontestible Manner.

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And when our Apostle, towards the Close of the preceding Chapter, and throughout This before us, had
written clearly concerning the Calling of the Jews at first,
and afterwards of the Gentiles, and affigned the Original
Cause thereof, even the Goodness and Mercy of GOD;
He then draws to a Conclusion of his whole Argument,
exclaiming as in the Text, O the Depth of the Riches of
the Wisdom and Knowlege of GOD! How unsearchable
are His Judgments, and His Ways past finding out!

In which Expressions his devout and holy Soul seems to be rapt up in Wonder and Amazement; or rather, according to the Figure in the Text, to be plung'd, fwallowed up and overwhelm'd with Admiration and Aftonishment. O the Depth, cries He! Like one in an unfathomable Abyss, that can find no Bottom. And what is it, which is to very deep? It follows here, O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD! q. d. O how profound, and of what vast, as well as deep, Abundance are the Treasures of Divine Wisdom and Knowledge! As the Divine Majesty perfectly knows whatfoever comes to pass in the World; to in his Wisdom He superintends, disposes and governs in all, but indeed in fuch a Way, and after fuch a Sort, as is to the humane Race truly wondrous and incomprehensible: For -How Unsearchable are his Judgments, and bis Ways past finding out!

These then are the Instances, which the Apostle produces, wherein the unsearchable Riches of Divine Wisdom and Knowlege are displayed, namely, in the Divine

Judgments and Ways.

By the Judgments of GOD; or, as the Greek runs, TA KPIMATA, we are to understand his Decrees, says the learned Grotius: And so we may take it concerning the Counsels and Purposes of the Divine Mind with regard to Nations, as well as particular Persons: Which, tho' some imagine, that they can clearly understand them, and hence arrogantly venture on minutely explaining them; yet they are certainly deep Things, and by the Sons of Men unsearchable.

And

And, by the Ways of GOD, we are to understand the Footsteps and Passages of his Providence in the moral Government of the World. Thefe are His Ways, which are past finding out. The Greek Word here, which we render past finding out, properly fignifies not to be traced, or by no diffinct Marks and perfect Characters to be found. And some of the more critical Interpreters acquaint us, that the Term is metaphorical, and taken from sharp-fighted and quick-scented Hounds, who are apt to ftop and pause and shew themselves at a Loss, when they have neither Scent nor Track of the Game which they have been pursuing. And thus it is with regard to the Children of Men: For however earnest, sharp and eager we may be to find out the Ways of the ALMIGHTY, yet we cannot trace them. --- Indeed we may foon perceive enough concerning them to fatisfy us, that in all His Ways, in all the Footsteps of His Providence, He proceeds as becometh Him; and as He has infinite Reason for all his Conduct towards Mankind; so He is Righteous in all His Ways and boly in all His Doings.

But altho' all the Divine Ways, as well as the Divine Counsels and Purposes, be the Result of perfect Understanding and unerring Reason; yet many are the Respects and Instances, wherein we cannot trace the Divine Conduct, nor find out the Grounds and Reasons of

the Divine Dispensations.

And now the important Truth before us is, That in the Ways of GOD, or Passages of His Providence, there is such a Depth of Divine Wisdom and Knowledge as is not to be traced and investigated by us.

And, in order to illustrate and confirm this Truth, so as that by the Blessing of GOD it may be firmly established in your Minds; our first Attempt shall be to set before you some of those Ways of GOD, which are not to be traced and investigated by us: And the next shall

shall be to make it evident, that such is the Divine Wisdom and Knowlege in these Ways as is not to be traced and investigated by us. And, having dispatched these Things, we shall then endeavour to produce such Reflections upon the whole as may be fit and natural and useful to us.

In the First Place then, we shall endeavour to set before you those Ways of GOD, which are not to be traced.

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And here it must be proper for us to begin with mentioning those Ways of GOD in calling and rejecting the Jews, and afterwards receiving the Gentiles to be His People. For These are the Ways of GOD, These the Passages of His Providence, to which our Text has an

undoubted and special Reference.

Why then, Sirs, was GOD pleased to call the Posterity of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to take them near unto Himself, to know them above all the Families of the Earth besides, and to confer signal Advantages and Glories on them ?—Was it because they were such a numerous People, and fo powerful a Nation? No verily! For they were the fewest of all People. And, at their greatest Attainments of Wealth, Power and Grandeur, They were not equal to many other Kingdoms in Subflance, Strength and Extent of Dominion.—Was it then on the Account of their superior Piety, and surpossing Rightecusness, that they were so distinguished and honored of Heaven? No furely! For they were an impious and unjust Race; they were a disobedient and gain-saying People all the Day long, even almost from the Time of their becoming the People of GOD to the very Time of their ceasing to be so. And hence, after They had been His peculiar People, and even His only People, for the Space of above fifteen hundred Years; He then, for their obstinate and incurable Infidelity and Wickedness, rejected them.—This is a most remarkable Event, which was predicted in the Law and the Prophets: And GOD

in His governing Providence has bro't it to pass accor-

dingly.

And now the righteous and good Governor of the World has received the Gentiles into His Church, and taken them to Himself for a peculiar People. But why? This at the first was so wondrous and amazing a Providence to the christianized Jews, that they could hardly believe it. And indeed it was so strange and incredible a Dispensation, that they knew not how to account for it, nor cared they to admit it, tho' conscious to the Certainty of the Fact.—But however it was in the clearest Manner reveled to our Apostle Paul; and he faithfully published it in the third Chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians, as well as in the Chapter before us.

And what now has been the Issue and Consequence of these unsearchable Ways of GOD, in rejecting the Jews and receiving the Gentiles as His People? Alas! The Former have continued in their Insidelity and Rebellion ever since; and so under the Displeasure of GOD, and their Rejection from Him for considerably above sixteen bundred Years. And, whether They will ever again be own'd as the People of GOD, and received into his special Favor and Protection; This is a Point, about which very learned and pious Men have a Diversity of Sentiments. But, as we have no Inclination at present to enter into the Controversy, we shall therefore leave it.

Here then let these Ways of GOD, tho' unsearchable, yet be duly heeded by us. Let us behold the righteous Severity, and wondrous Goodness of our GOD: On them, which fell, Severity; but towards the Gentiles Goodness, if They continue in His Goodness: Otherwise what should hinder but that They should be cut off also, if they continue in His Goodness:

nue in their Infidelity and Wickedness?

But, having thus noted the special Ways of GOD, to which our Text has a peculiar Reference; we may now, as I humbly conceive, very fairly and without any Room for just Exception, speak of some other Ways of GOD, which are not to be traced and searched out by us.

Thus,

Thus, The Ways of GOD are past finding out, when He sometimes accomplishes his most holy Counsels and Purposes by such Means, and in such Ways and Manners, as are improbable, and in bumane Apprehensions altegether unlikely. The Divine Ways in this Regard are not as the Ways of Men: But, as the Heavens are bigh above the Earth, so are the Ways of GOD bigher than our Ways, as well as bis Tho'ts above our Tho'ts. In Pursuance of his most holy Counsels, He, by such Ways and Means as appear to Men improbable, and even in their Apprehension impossible, sometimes effects Things, and produces Events in the World.

As for Instance here: It pleases the supreme Ruler of the World and Head of the Church to make the Profperity of his and his People's Enemies the Occasion of their Ruin. O the Depth of this Counsel! And bow unsearchable are these Divine Ways! It surely becomes us to admire at them; and with admiring Tho'ts, and adoring Language, to fay with regard to them; O LORD GOD, How great are thy Works! Thy Tho'ts are very deep. A bruitish Man knoweth not; neither doth a Fool understand This: When the Wicked spring as the Grass, and when all the Workers of Iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed forever. But it is good for me to draw near to Thee; and I have put my Trust in Thee, that I may declare thy wondrous Works, and own thy Ways unfearchable.

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And sometimes, by oblique Ways, and seemingly contrary Footsteps of Divine Providence, GOD proceeds to accomplish his Purposes, and his Goings cannot with ease be traced. Joseph, you are sensible, who was envied and hated of his Brethren, was Divinely advertised, that he should be raised and advanced to great and high Dignity: And yet by what strange Means, and in what unlikely Ways, was it accomplished! He was fold for a Slave and carried into Ægypt: There, by reason of false Accusation, he was unrighteously cast into Prison and bound in Irons. And how improbable was it now, that

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that he should become a great Man, and be advanced in Dignity and Power, even next to the superb Monarch of Egypt? And yet GOD in His governing Providence promoted his Advancement by the very improbable ways and Means preceeding it, and made all the seemingly insuperable Hindrances and Obstacles to it effectually to surther and complete his admirable Designs and Purposes.

And in the like wenderful Ways does it sometimes come to pass, that the Projections and Attempts of the great Adversary and his Instruments to ruin the Churches and People of the Son of GOD are baffled and turned into Foolifbness. So when it was the real Intention and vehement Endeavor of the Pagan Roman Emperors, by repeted, long continued and horrible Persecutions to root Christianity out of the World, it was all to no Purpose. No! What then was the Issue of their cruel Design and their bloodily earnest Endeavors? See, Sirs, and admire the mysterious and wonderful Ways of GOD! An ancient Writer justly remark'd with regard to this Affair, Quoties metimur, plures efficimur; The more we are mowed, fays Tertullian, the more we are encreased .--And it cannot have escaped our Notice, that, the more the Church of Rome have attempted to root out the Protestant Religion, it has the more commonly and powerfully prevail'd; and that maugre all the deceitful Meafures projected and all the Methods of Violence and Cruelty used by them.

Resides; By such Ways and Means as Mankind would apprehend not to be so proper, nor so adapted to answer the Ends proposed, does it please the LORD of all sometimes to produce great Effects in the World. Who could have imagined, that Naaman the Syrian would have been restored to perfect Health by a Method so easy and gentle? Yet He was thorowly and most wondrously recovered by it. And who could have hoped, that the Walls of Jericho should totter and fall into spreading Ruins in such a Way and by such Means as were used for it?

Nor yet is This all; But it sometimes pleases GOD to produce great and marvellous Effects by such Means as Men judge not only to be unlikely, but even to be foolish and contemptible. Thus, without mentioning any other Example of it; it deserves to be remarked, that many Thousands and even Millions of People have been converted by the Foolishness of Preaching; that is to say, by the Preaching of a crucified and Risen Jesus, which in the Account of the Jews and Greeks was only Foolishness.

Now how exquisite and unsearchable are these Divine Ways? Who can accurately trace them, and who can find them out unto Perfection?

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In the next Place, Tho' GOD is pleased to permit moral Evil in the World, yet He takes Care by Ways which we cannot trace and investigate to bring great moral Good out of it. - Thus when it pleased Him, that his Son should be put to Grief, and He suffered that egregious and horrible Crime to be perpetrated, the Crucifixion of the Messiah; it was permitted and came to pass, that We might be redeemed from all Iniquity, and purified to Himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.—And so, in his governing Providence, He often causes the Sins of His People to be the Occasion of vast moral Good and spiritual Advantage to them. He so disposes and orders Matters, that Occasions of Falling and Temptations to Sin are presented before them: And they, not fensible of their Weakness and Hazard, and hence not lifting up their Hearts to the GOD of all Grace to guard them against the enchanting Circumstances before them, and to deliver them from the Evil, are thro' Inadvertence and Surprize caught, as a simple Bird in the Snare of the Fowler. Then they are abash'd and confounded: And they are thus bumbled and proved; and for the future they grow more prayerful, circumspect, vigilant and holy in all Manner of Conversation.— So wondrous are the Divine Ways in this Affair as not to be traced by us.

But

#### 12 A Funeral Discourse on the Death

But we proceed to observe, in the Third and lastPlace, Unsearchable are those Ways of GOD, and not to be found out, which seem not to agree with His Word. By these Ways of GOD, we mean such Passages of Divine Providence, as seem to be inconsistent with the Divine

Promises and Threatnings.

There is frequently such a State of Things to be found with regard to good and wicked People in the World, that it is not so very easy from the Word of GOD to account for it.— Is not Good promised to the Pious, and is not penal Evil threatned against the Wicked? How then comes it to pass, that the Wicked are often and long in easy and comfortable Circumstances; while the Good are frequently afflicted and exercised with great and

long continued Sorrows?

These Things, tho' they be not really repugnant, are yet seemingly inconfistent and contradictory. hence very wife, as well as very good, Men have been puzled and perplexed with these Divine Ways, and utterly at a Loss how to trace and how to account for Them. So it was with the pious Asaph, who declares himself to be at a Loss about the Divine Conduct in these Instances, as in Psalm lxxiii. 16. When I tho't to know This, it was too painful for me; or rather, according to the emphatical Hebrew Expression, it was Labor to mine Eyes h. e. It greatly fatigued my Mind to look and fearch into it. And the weeping Prophet, while He allows the Righteousness of these Divine Ways, yet begs leave to Reason with his GOD concerning His Judgments, h. e. His holy Purposes and the Execution of them. And then He proceeds wondring and enquiring, as in Jerem. xii. 1. Wherefore doth the Way of the Wicked prosper, &c? -And another holy Prophet, while He acknowleges the Divine Purity and moral Rectitude, yet at the same Time admires at the Divine Conduct in the Instance before us and enquires as wanting to be resolved about it; saying as in Habak. i. 13. Thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and canft

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canst not look upon Iniquity: Wherefore lookest Thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy Peace, when the Wicked devoureth the Man that is more righteous than he?

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But, now for preventing any Confusion of Sentiments, We must be a little more distinct and particular.

On one Hand then, It is observable, that the Ways of GOD sometimes do not appear to be according to His Threatnings: And in this Regard His Dealings are not easily to be traced. It is Divinely threatned, that it shall go ill with the Wicked, for the Reward of bis Hands shall be given bim : It is the Divine Threatning, that there shall be many Sorrows to the Wicked; and concerning those, who are Wicked over much, it is said, that they shall die before their Time. And yet is it not frequently otherwise? Have not the Wicked often many Advantages and Comforts, and that too fometimes in a constant Series and long Succession of them? It is a plain Case. The Wicked often are not in Trouble as other Men, neither are they plagued as others, who are good and upright: Their Eyes stand out with Fatness: They have more than Heart could wish. Yea, such and so unsearchable are the Divine Ways, the Wicked sometimes live and become old, and grow mighty in Power.

But then, on the other Hand, The Divine Ways feem fometimes to be inconfistent with the Divine Promises and even contrary to them. There was a remarkable Instance of this Truth in the Divine Ways particularly with regard to the Family of David: Which Ways were so mysterious and perplexing, that they were not to be traced. For it was promised to David, and we have the Promise recorded in Psalm. lxxxix. 36 and 37. His Seed shall endure forever, and bis Throne as the Sun: It shall be established forever as the Moon before me, &c: And yet we find in the 38 h. and some following Verses of the very same Psalm these forrowful Complaints and melancholy

Moans

Moans. But Thou has cast off and abborred: Thou bast been wroth with thine Anointed: Thou bast made void the Covenant of thy Servant : Thou bast profaned his Crown by casting it to the Ground. All that pass by the Way spoil bim: He is a Reproach to his Neighbours: Thou hast covered him with Shame, &c. How dark were these Ways, and how puzling these Dealings of the Great GOD! That the Family of David, to which fuch fignal and glorious Things were promifed, should be for a Derision and Scorn among the Pagans. Is This, faid they in a taunting Manner to the poor Captives in Babylon, Is this your high and mighty King? And where is now your everlasting Family; from which ONE is to descend, who is to rule over all and reign forever? Verily at that Time Things look'd very discouraging, nor was there any finding out

of the Divine Ways.

But there is, as you are all fensible, a more general Promise made to the Pious, that it shall be well with them. And yet, fuch is the Conduct of Divine Providence, it is the Portion of many good Men to fee evil Days: Yea few and evil are often the Days of their Pilgrimage here below. And indeed it is no rare and unusual Thing for them to be persecuted for the very sake of their Vertue and Righteousness: This it is, which causes the Children of Craft and Cruelty to deprive them of their worldly Interest by Fraud and Violence: And hence they are constrain'd to live in abject Poverty and piteous Wretchedness; whereas it might have been quite otherwife with them, if they could licentiously trespass on the Laws of Truth and Vertue! And there is a general Engagement concerning such as fear JEHOVAH, that their Days shall be prolonged. And yet how many have there been, whose Lives have been shortned and the Number of whose Days have been finished; because, from the reverential Fear of GOD, they would not act an immoral and wrong Part? This was the Case of Righteous Abel who on this very Account was murthered by his inhuman Brother. And

And, besides such general Engagements, there are some particular ones with regard to the Children of Vertue and holy Obedience. Thus there is an apparent Promise of long Life to such as are dutiful Children: And it must be allowed, that in many Instances it has been accomplished. But yet have there not been valuable and very pious Children, so dutiful to their Parents as that for the whole World they would not in Action or by a Word offend them, who nevertheless have not been suffered to continue with them by Reason of Death?

And there is also the Promise of the Life that now is, or of worldly and temporal Blessings, to Piety, and such as exercise themselves unto it. And yet how many have suffered as to their worldly Affairs and Interests for this very Reason, because they have stedsastly chosen, and would resolutely practise the Things which are pleasing

to GOD?

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But some, as we are aware, will be ready to start and say, How can these Things be, and how can they be reconciled? The glorious GOD, who is the GOD of Truth and without Iniquity, cannot lie: And hence all the Promises, as well as Threatnings, of his Word must be sure and faithful. But how then comes it to pass, that the Wicked prosper? And, when it is engaged to the Pious, that it shall be well with them, and temporal Blessings shall be conferred on them; nevertheless they have worldly Enjoyments witheld from them, and have many Afflictions and much Tribulation in the World?

It is usually said in answer to such Enquiries, that, as the Threatnings of GOD shall sooner or later take Place; so shall the Divine Promises. For These are not to be taken absolutely; but they are to be understood in this restrained Sense, so far as shall be most for the Divine Glory and the Good of the Pious. All indeed must allow, that, as the Divine Wisdom is infinite; GOD knows what is best upon the whole; and in particular whether worldly Prosperity is best for His saithful Servants—It may indeed be good and very desireable in itself, and it may be of no

small Advantage with regard to others. And yet it may not be convenient, nor yet safe, for good People: For it is possible, nor at all unlikely, that, if they had a large and affluent Supply of worldly Comforts, they might be forgetful of GOD, as well as of themselves; and so give the Reins to criminal Appetites and Inclinations, and hurry on their ownRuin. And as GOD perfectly knows whether outward Prosperity would be thus dangerous and hurtful to them; fo we cannot fay, that, supposing This would be the Case, GOD has promised to give it unto them.—And besides, it is probable, that an adverse State of Things may be very good for them: For they may, by Means thereof, be confiderably advanced in Wisdom and Vertue; and so GOD may be more glorified by them in this World, and They may gain a bigher Degree of Glory in the happy Apartments of the invisible World. And hence an afflicted and forrowful Condition in Life may be really better for them than a State of outward Prosperity.

But, with regard both to the Promises and Threatnings of the Eternal GOD, there is one Thing to be confidered, which greatly ferves to remove Objections and folve Difficulties as to the Article before us: Which is, that both the Promises and Threatnings of GOD shall receive their plenary and perfett Accomplishment in the future

State.

As then to the Threatnings of the Divine Word against those, who go on impenitently and securely in their Sins, These shall furely, punctually and fully come upon them in the future State.—The well-meaning, but ill-judging, Friends of the upright and inflexibly good Job infifted indeed on it, that fignal Calamity must come on the Wicked even in this World: And it must be granted, that so it fometimes comes to pass.—But yet it is frequently otherwife: They are often preserved from deserved Plagues, and Miseries: Tho' they are sometimes kept from lesser Judgments, that they may be overwhelm'd with greater in the present World, But, in the future State, they **shall** 

shall have all those Plagues and Miseries, which are threatned against the wicked and impenitent, inslicted on them; and, as it is expressed in the prophetical and sigurative Stile, The Smoke of their Torment shall ascend forever and ever.

And then, As to the Promises of the Faithful GOD, that the Righteous shall flourish and see Good, that their Days shall be prolonged, and they shall rejoice and be glad always; if He see it to be fittest and best for them, that these Promises should be accomplished unto them in this World, He will doubtless take Care in His governing Providence that They shall be so. But, if, for the most wife and gracious Purpofes and Ends, He fees caufe not to fulfil these Engagements in this World; yet He will certainly and to the full, He will completely and forever make them good in the heavenly World. There they shall enjoy many Days, and see good and rejoice in them all: There they shall not lack any good Thing, but have all their Wants supplied, and all their Desires satisfied: And there their Joy always shall be overflowing, and yet ever full: In thy Presence, O Incarnate GOD, is this Fulness of Joy, and at thy Right Hand are these Pleasures forevermore.

We have thus been instancing in some Passages of Divine Providence, which seem to be inconsistent, with the Word of GOD, and to run counter to it: Which Ways of GOD are indeed very difficult to be traced. We have indeed offered a sew Sentiments, which may serve in some Measure to clear and vindicate the DivineConduct. But yet, after all, O Thou First, Thou Greatest and Best of Beings, who art the supreme Moderator of all Things, and our Lord and Father, we must consess, that, after all we have heard, it is but a small Portion of thy Conduct which falls within our View: And, as Thy Judgments are unsearchable to us, so Thy Ways are pest finding out

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But, having thus endeavored to set before you some of those Ways of GOD which are not to be traced and investi-

gated by us; our next Attempt must be to shew, that the Knowlege and Wisdom of GOD in these His Divine Ways is not to be traced and investigated by us.

And now.

This must appear evident to us from the Nature and Reason of the Thing: For the Knowlege and Wisdom of GOD is infinite and eternal. And it therefore becomes us devoutly to acknowlege and adore before Him. Great is our LORD, and of great Power: His Understanding is infinite; and it is everlasting. And, because it is so; therefore it is not to be traced and investigated by us. Indeed the Wisdom and Knowlege of GOD is His Nature. And altho' it is common with Divines to ascribe Ideas to the Divine Intellect, and fate the Order of them after the Manner of Men; against which we have no Design to controvert and contend, tho' we ourselves are afraid of being fo prefumptuous; yet the Truth is, that the Divine Knowlege and Wisdom is but GOD bimself. Therefore His Wildom and Knowlege must be infinite and unchangeable, eternal and incomprehenfible by Creatures: And hence how is it possible, that the Ways as well as Purposes of this Knowlege and Wisdom should be investigated by us?

And, as the Wisdom and Knowlege of GOD is infinite; on the other Side, The Knowlege andWisdom of Creatures, and that of even the most knowing and wife, is but limited and finite. And consequently the most wise and knowing of them can only perceive and apprehend the finite and limited Effects of Divine and Infinite Knowlege: And verily the Knowlege and Wisdom of the most wise and knowing Creatures, when compared with the Understanding of the only wife GOD, is but Foolishness, but Ignorance, and less than nothing and Vanity. And is it then probable, or indeed is it possible, for such low Beings, and of fuch contracted Minds, as Men at best are, and for fuch as stand confessed to be finful Worms of the Duft, to fearch out the Purpofes of infinite Wisdom, and

trace the Knowlege of the Divine Ways?

But, altho we must be sensible of these Things, if we duly attend to the Distates of Nature and Reason; which we ought very highly to prize, and for which we ought to be very thankful to the effential Word of GOD, who fo enlightneth every Man that cometh into the World: Nevertheless we have a more clear Discovery and full Revelation of these Things in the inspired Writings, that the Knowlege and Wisdom of the Divine Purposes and Ways is not to be traced and investigated. And here will your Goodness bear with me and can your Pas tience last, while I bring to your Minds some Passages of the Book of GOD, which serve to establish it, that the Wisdom and Knowlege of the Divine Counsels and Days is unsearchable? Hear then the Wish of Zophar with regard to the pious Job, in Chapter xi. of Job, 5th and 6th Verses, O that GOD would speak, - and that HE would show Thee the Secrets of Wisdom, that are double to that which is! The Secrets of Wisdom here are the DivineCounsels and Reasons of the Divine Proceedings: These we do not know, nor may we pretend to investigate them: For They are out of our Sight, nor can we trace them. And these Secrets of Divine Wisdom are double to that which is; that is, They are much more than what is discovered to the humane Race: And very little indeed is it, that Men can perceive and know, to what is really in the Wisdom and Knowlege of the Divine Counsels and Ways. And, when the most penetrating and enlightned Persons on Earth have searched as far as they could into these Things, and reasoned in the best Manner they could concerning them; they have at length been constrained to acknowlege and exclaim, as in Job xxvi. 14. Lo, Thefe are Parts of His Ways: But bow little a Portion is beard of Him! - Again; we read in Psalm xxxvi. 6. Thy Judgments, Jehovah, are a great Deep: Thy Judgments, that is to say, Thy Counsels and Thy Ways in the moral Government of the World, are a great Deep; fo that it is not for any mortal Eye or finite Undestanding to reach them : No! They are impervious

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pervious and unfathomable to humane Minds.-It is alfo acknowleged to the Divine Glory, as in Pfalm lxxvii. 19. Thy Way is in the Sea, and thy Path in the great Waters, and thy Footsteps are not known: The Sense and Meaning of which Acknowlegement, as we take it, is, The Wisdom and Knowlege of thy Counsels and Ways is so exquifite and unfearchable, that we cannot inveftigate them and follow Thee close in them: The Footsteps of thy Providence are foon loft out of our View; and we are as much at a Loss to recover the Traces of them as if Thou didst tread on the Sea, and walk over the great Waters.-Let us also attend to what is delivered by the perfett and upright Man upon this Article: He, having enquired, where shall Wisdom be found, and where is the Place of Understanding? And, having repeted the Enquiry a little afterwards, in Job xxviii. 20: He then adds upon it, in Ver. 21, It is bid from the Eyes of all living; that is, it is not only hid from all the Animals beneath us, but from all the humane Race, and even all the living Beings who are superior to them in Rank and Understanding. But who then knoweth it? It follows, in the 23d and 27th Verses, GOD understandeth the Way thereof; and He knoweth the Way thereof: He prepared it : Yea, He searched it out : The Meaning of which, as we humbly conceive, is this, Altho' no one else has, yet GOD has, a most clear, comprehensive, full and perfect Knowlege of his own Wisdom and Understanding; as Angels and Men gain the Knowlege of the Things which they have thoro'ly fearched.

Now from these Things it should seem, that it is too much for vain Man, and it will not do for them, to think of searching out the Wisdom of the Divine Counsels, and the Knowlege of the Divine Ways. And accordingly fome of the wifest, as well as the best of Men, have been duely fensible of this, and humbly acknowleged it with regard unto themselves. Such Knowlege, says the sweet Pfalmist of Ifrael in Pfalm cxxxix. 6, is too wonderful for me: It is high; I cannot attain unto it. And altho? Solomon,

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Solomon, the most celebrated Man for the Character of Wise, searched after this Wisdom, yet he could by no means investigate it to his own Satisfaction: I beheld, writes he in Eccles. viii. 17, all the Work of GOD, that a Man cannot find out the Work that is done under the Sun: Because, tho' a Man labor to seek it out, yet he shall not find it: Yea further, tho' a wise Man think to know it, yet he shall not be able to find it.

Thus it has been our Attempt to shew, that in the Divine Ways, as well as Counsels, there is such a Divine Wisdom and Knowlege as is not to be traced and investigated by us: And, if our Attempt has in any Measure succeeded, O GOD and Father of the Spirits of all Flesh, Not unto us, not unto us, who are feeble and vile; but to thy Divine Power and the unsearchable Riches of thy

Grace be the Praise and Glory.

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But we are now, in the last Place, to reflect in a suitable Manner upon what has been offered.

In the First Place then, Since the Counsels of GOD are unsearchable, and His Ways past finding out; hence let not any of us too bufily and curiously prie into these Secrets of the Deity. Secret Things, we are expresly inform'd, belong unto GOD, but Things revealed belong to us and to our Children. And yet, fuch is the Vanity of human Minds, and such the Corruption of Mens Hearts, that they do not give a fuitable Attention nor pay a proper Regard to Things revealed; while at the same Time they are for entring into the Palace of the immortal King and enquiring into the impenetrable Secrets of His Cabinet, and they have even the hardiness to divulge their own Discoveries. But this is quite wrong and vain in us.—It ought to humble us, that the least and most common Things in the World are beyond our thorow Knowledge and Comprehension: And how then can we expect by the most careful Researches to comprehend the Nature of GOD, His moral Government and the Manner of His Influence

fluence upon his intelligent and moral Creatures? O let not our Eyes be lofty, nor Hearts so baughty and vain asto exercise ourselves too much in these Things, which are too great and high for us. There is a good Passage to this Purpose of one of the greatest Divines, that has lived fince the Days of Inspiration, with regard to the Divine Counsels and the Divine Manner of influencing moral Agents, which we may do well to entertain and keep in our Minds for suppressing their Vanity as to these Matters; If, fays he, in his Catholic Theology, any particular Manner thereof offer itself to your Minds, as that which probably seems to be the Right; it may afford you Reason therefore to suspect, that it is not the Right : Because it is certain the Manner is beyond our Reach: And what Man can comprehend is infinitely below GOD.

However in the next Place, let us not hence conclude, that, since the Ways, as well as Counsels of GOD, are past finding out, therefore we may be careless or negligent about making any Enquiry concerning the Divine Conduct and the Works of Divine Providence. There are indeed some of the Divine Ways which escape our View and exceed ourComprehension: But then there are others, which can more easily be traced and better understood. Thus it is particularly as to those grievous Calamities, with which GOD is pleased sometimes to visit a faithless and rebellious People: For he, that runs, may read Part of the Divine Intent and Meaning in them, and perceive in some good Measure wherefore God contendeth with them: 'Tis this, as Divine Inspiration has given it unto us, in Psalm xxviii. 5, Because they regard not the Works of the LORD, nor the Operations of His Hands, the LORD will not build them up, but destroy them. And.

In the Third Place, As it appears, that the Counsels of GOD are unsearchable and his Ways past finding out; let us hence have a Care of misinterpreting the Divine Methods and Ways, and so making a wrong Use and Im-

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provement of them. The Divine Majesty, who rules and who doeth what soever He pleases among the Inhabitants of this World, as well as governs in the Armies of Heaven above, may feem fometimes to frown upon his People, and to smile on their Enemies. But what then? Shall we hence imagine, that GOD approves of wicked Men, and is regardless of the People whom He loves? No! This would be a wrong Construction and Sense of the Matter: And it would be very irregular and finful to act from fuch an Apprehension. And, in order to guard us against any such Misapprehension and bad Conduct, let us attend to what the Divine Being has reveled by one of His Prophets, in Mal. iii. from the 14th V. Ye have said, It is vain to serve GOD: And what Profit is it that we kept his Ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts? And now we call the Proud happy: yea they that work Wickedness are set up, yea they that tempt GOD are even delivered. Then they, that feared the LORD, spake often one to another; and the LORD bearkned and beard, and a Book of Remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the LORD and that tho't upon his Name: And they shall be mine, faith the LORD of Hosts, in that Day when I make up my Jewels; and I will spare them, as a Man spareth his own Son that serveth him: Then shall ye return and discern betweeen the Righteous and the Wicked; between bim that serveth GOD, and him that serveth Him not. Moreover, and in the last Place, Let us all, upon the

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Moreover, and in the last Place, Let us all, upon the whole, prepare and ripen, by the Assistance of Divine Grace, for the happy Time, wherein we may enjoy more clear and full Discoveries of the Divine Counsels, and the dark and mysterious Ways of Divine Providence.

We live in a World, wherein gloomy and perplexing Events do ever and anon occur: And fuch are sometimes the Ways of Divine Providence, so dark and very intricate are they, that in vain do our Understandings try to trace them, and find out the particular Intent and precise Meaning of them.

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## 24 A Funeral Discourse on the Death

And now,

My Honorable, Reverend and Beloved Hearers,

I am very well persuaded, that you consider the Death of the High, Puissant and most Illustrious Prince, FREDERICK LEWIS, Elder Son of our most gracious Sovereign King GEORGE the Second, Prince of Great-Britain, Electoral-Prince of Brunswick-Lunenburgh, Prince of Wales, &c. as a very darksome Event, and one of the mysterious Ways of GOD which is not to

be investigated by us.

'Twas on the Night of Gloomines, Clouds and thick Darkness preceding the Twenty-first of March, between eleven and twelve o'Clock, that He departed this Life, to the utmost Grief of His Royal Parent, His Illustrious Consort, and the whole Royal Family; and to the inexpressible Sorrow, as well as unspeakable Loss, of the Public; who had conceived highly concerning Him, who expected good and great Things from such a wise and merciful Prince, and were ready to say, This same shall hereaster more considerably and extensively comfort us.

But ah! How are our fond Hopes withered! How are our pleasing Views and Expectations at an End! For the lovely Prince, as well as the rough Peasant, dies and returns to the Dust. — Thus, LORD GOD, bast Thou turned our promising Hope and Joy into Disappointment and Mourning: Thou bast deprived us of Gladness, and girded us with Sackcloth: Thou dost hide thy Face from us: and we are troubled.

It cannot be reasonably expected, that we, on this Side of the wide Atlantic, should be able, from a thorow Knowlege of the dear PRINCE, to give Him his entire and just Character: And hence we shall not be so aspiring as to undertake it.

But however, fince there are fundry Particulars relating to Him which have reached us; and as it is fit and right, that These should be rehearsed; and that not only

out of Respect unto Him, but from a Religious Regard to the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, that so the Glory of His Gifts and Benefits may redound unto Him; therefore we cannot well be excused from piously de-

claring these Things.

As the best Care was taken with regard to his Highness's Education; so his Improvements in Wisdom and Goodness were answerable to it: For He soon discovered, that He carried a Mind within Him beyond his Years, and manly Tho'ts and Concerns in the Bloom of Youth: And, as apprehending Himself born for greater Things than those, about which young People generally employ themselves, He behaved Himself accordingly. And, on these Accounts, He soon became no less dear to his Royal Parents, than on the Account of his Descent from Them.

It was no Disadvantage to the PRINCE, that He was of a sweet and engaging Aspect, and a very agreeable Air and Deportment; For, by means of These external Circumstances, He at once drew and allured the Assection of all, who had any Sense of what is amiable and be-

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But it was much more to his real Character and Credit and Glory, that he was of a humane, benevolent and kind Temper of Mind: And hence He was easy of Access, courteous of Speech and condescending in Behaviour: For, altho' He were next in Dignity to his most excellent Majesty, the KING, Yet He considered Himself as a Man and a Subject, in common with the Rest of his Fellow Subjects beneath Him: And hence He conversed and acted in the Palace and abroad with continual Mansuetude, Humility and Gentleness.

As He very well knew, that Political Knowledge and Wisdom was requisite to qualify one for the Government of others; therefore he was careful and industrious to acquire this Knowledge and Wisdom, both from the most able Preceptors and from approved Authors: Tho' at the same Time other Branches of Science were not neglected

· by Him.

Behold Him at length commencing Man; and, thro the tender Care of our gracious Sovereign, happily married to a Princess of matchless Form, of surpassing Accomplishments, a shining Pattern of Vertue and of incomparable Merit in the Esteem of all around her. And now how careful was he to perform the Offices of the wedded State, and set a bright Example of connubial Fidelity and Tenderness, in the midst of an adulterous and prossignte Generation. And it surely demonstrates a prodigious Degeneracy of Manners and a shameless Estrontery in Vice, that so many would still licentiously break the nuptial Bond; while they had the Example of the Prince, as well as the Laws and Threatnings of the immortal GOD, against them.

The worthy PRINCE, as not born for Himself but Others, was studious to behave aright and well towards them. Hence He was devoted to his Royal Parent and the public Good: And as He wore the Motto on his Arms as Prince of Wales, Ich Dien, or I serve; so He fulfilled it: For He tho't it his Honor to serve the best of Kings, as well as of Parents; and, while He was the Delight of all Mankind, He was willing to serve and

belp them all.

He gave the World some Specimens and Proofs of his Disposition to promote the Trade and Commerce of his Royal Parent's Kingdoms, and to encourage Learning and useful Arts in them: And it was doubtless pleasing to His Majesty's good Subjects at Home, as it has been to us in these distant Lands, that He, on these Accounts, received such sit Acknowlegements and public Testimonies of Respect and Gratitude. Besides his being the sirst Commissioner for building the Royal Hospital at Greenwich, and Governor of the British white Herring Fishery; He was chosen the Chancellor of the University of Dublin, and a Fellow of the Royal Society in London, and received other Testimonies besides of national Esteem.

It must be mentioned to his Renown, that He in an exemplary Way attended on the public Offices of Religion:

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Nor was He ashamed, as too many of the great Ones of the Earth seem to be, to acknowlege his Maker and Lord,

as well as ours, in private with his Houshold.

And besides, He was a Prince in Goodness and Benignity, and exhibited a high and mighty Pattern of Chriftian Love and good Works. Among the Proofs and Evidences of This, New-England has some to produce and utter with fingular Delight and Satisfaction. His Royal Highness was pleased to fend a very handsome Gratuity towards the School for the Education of Indian Children at Housitonock under the Care of the late pious and learned Mr. Sergeant. And, as we understand, it was the expressed Design and Purpose of the PRINCE to grant to the Successor of the same reverend and very valuable Missionary, if properly recommended, a very handsome Annuity as long as He lived. So that the Goodness and Charity of his Royal Highness, like the pleasing Light of the Morning-Star, was not confined to the other Hemisphere, but shone over the vast Ocean, and reached to the distant Wilds of these American Regions.

His Royal Highness, the Prince, thorowly underflood, that, altho' Government was of Divine Institution, yet the Form of it is an humane Ordinance: He knew, that the British Monarchy was not absolute and indefeazable, but elective and hereditarily so: He saw clearly, that nothing was lawful in the Administration but what was allowed by the Laws of the Realm; and that He, who wears the Crown by the National Consent and Choice, is not above the Laws, nor at Liberty to dispense with them.— Nor have we any Doubt, but that his Royal Highness was confirmed in these Sentiments and Views from the Administration of His most Excellent Father and Grandsather, and so established in his Purposes by the Will of GOD to rule and govern according to them.

Thus was his Royal Highness prepared to be the Father of his People, before He was really so: And, by all that we can collect, He was inflexibly determined to do nothing that might prove detrimental to the Interests of Great-Britain, and it's Dependencies; nor to neglect any Thing, which might promote, fecure and protract the Welfare and Happiness of the People to be his future Charge. His future Charge, did I fay ? Alas ! He must be just fitted and qualified to receive them as such; and yet, so unsearchable is the Divine Conduct, He must be removed from them, nor inherit their delightful Homage and Subjection.

These are a few, of the many valuable Things, relating to His Royal Highness; which endeared Him unto us while living; and which, at his Deceafe, caufe a general Concern and Grief, and the fuitable Expressions of it a-

mong us.

We are now therefore dutifully following our gracious Sovereign and Father, the KING, and our Mother Kingdoms, tho' with more late and unequal Steps, in paying our mournful Respects on the Account of the PRINCE'S Exit.

His Majesty's good and most dutiful Subjects of this Province, who enjoy the Benefit of the Civil Establishment in Favor of our Religious Rights and Privileges; and who are as a People, if we understand our own Principles, the most thorow Asserters of the just Liberties of Mankind, are to a Man inviolably attached to His Majesty King GEORGE, and the Protestant Succession in his Royal House: To a Man therefore we unite in deploring the Loss of his Royal Son: And it is our united Wish and most fervent Prayer, that His Majesty may be supported under this grievous Bereavement; that He may gain spiritual Good by it, and that, by the Loss of his own desireable Son, He may be further influenced and animated to espouse the Cause of the Son of GOD, and promote His Kingdom and Interest not only at Home, but in other European Nations also.

We have also a most tender Sympathy with Thee, Illustrious Princess Augusta, who hast lost thy well beloved

loved and excellent Prince; and who, as long as Thou didst enjoy Him, didst exhibit a great and engaging Pattern of conjugal Affection and Obedience. The LORD GOD Almighty strengthen Thee, and uphold Thee by the Right Hand of his Righteousness! The Prince of Life be with thee, thy constant Guide and kind Supporter! May He never forsake, and never fail Thee!

At the same Time we condole with his Royal Highness the DUKE, with the Princesses and the Rest of the Royal Family; heartily desiring and entreating, that the GOD of all Grace and Comfort would afford unto them Spiritual Supplies and Consolations, which are indeed no small Things; but unspeakably greater and more glorious than all the Delights and Grandeurs which this World can afford them.

Our Hearts too are properly affected in thinking of the Posterity of his Royal Highness: And we are much grieved for them, that They are so early and soon deprived of their meritorious Parent; and fo They may not be allowed any longer to be instructed by his Counsels, and charmed and led along by his Example. however the Divine Arbiter and Sovereign LORD of the World, that He has not left Great-Britain and its Dependencies to bewail a broken Lineage and a doubtful Throne: For his Royal Highness has left five Sons and three Daughters as Pledges of Peace and Comfort unto And it is now our humble and earnest Prayer, that his Royal Highness Prince GEORGE, sweet Youth, our FREDERICK now, who fuceeds his Father as Heir apparent to the Imperial Crown of Great-Britain, and that his Royal Highness's Brethren and Sisters also may be the Special Care and Charge of Divine Providence, that they may be preserved for eminent Blessings, and that the Superior Wisdom and heroic Vertues of their long and glorious Train of Ancestors, from his present Majesty, whom GOD preserve, even back to the Times of the Reformation, may be inherited and possessed by them.

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But, fince it appears, that a most forrowful Event has befallen us; the Question is, What is the Improvement that we are to make of it? What are we to do for the Support of our Minds under it, and to keep them from sinking under the Pressure of such a heavy Bereavement, as well as all other grievous Dispensations.

Hear now then the Conclusion of the whole Matter. Let us all both Rulers and Subjects, both high and low, both rich and poor together, by the Aids and Affiftances of Divine Grace most heartily implored and thankfully improved, not put our Trust in Princes, nor any of the Sons of Men, in whom there is no help: For their Breath goeth forth: They return to the Earth, and in that very Day all their Tho'ts concerning us perish. But let us put our Trust in the almighty Power and infinite Wisdom and Goodness of GOD: For altho' an excellent Prince has left our Earth, to fit, as we trust, with Princes above, even with the Princes of the heavenly Court; and, on the Account of This, as well as the sad moral State of Things at Home, and in our Land, our Minds cannot but be clouded and filled with Perplexities and Fears; yet we ought, from a clear Apprehension of the infinite Wisdom, Ability and Readiness of GOD to appear for us and protect and bless us, to make These, as well as His Promises thro' JESUS CHRIST, our Hope and Trust and unfailing Refuge: And accordingly, let us, from a real Conviction and hearty Sense of these Divine Perfections and Promises, commit the Case of our Nations and this poor Land to the Divine Being, with Hope in his Mercy, as well as Dependance on His Power and Wisdom, yet to save, defend and prosper us; but with

with an entire and profound Resignation to His sovereign Will. —— And let us all acquaint our selves with our GOD and be at Peace: Let us think on our Ways, and turn our Feet into the Divine Testimonies; let us make baste and make no Delay to turn to GOD thro' the only Mediator, and to glorify Him on the Earth and serve our Generation according to His Will, as well as to work out

our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.

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These Things are effentially fit and right: And They are good and profitable unto Men : And, if we do these Things, and continue constant and faithfulunto the Death in them; Then, we shall bave an open and abundant Entrance ministred to us into the everlasting Kingdom of our great LORD and SAVIOUR: Then, The dark Events of relative Time will be explained to universal Satisfaction; and those Counsels and Ways of GOD, which have been inexplicable, nor to be investigated by us, will be unfolded and appear in a Light unspeakable and full of Glory: And, in Fine, Then, Then, All the intelligent happy Creation will with one Confent render due Acknowlegements and Glories to GOD and the Lamb: we all, without one of this great Affembly miffing, join the Heavenly Throng, faying, Bleffing and Honor and Glory be to Him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever, AMEN!



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I hade Things are effectably in and regime. And The good and profitable unto Merry and come the confiant and profitable unto the in them: Then we find here an come and and the configuration of the minifered control in the configuration of the configuration will only configuration of the configuration of the configuration will enter the configuration of the configu







